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INFO ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 000854

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SENSITIVE
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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/WATERS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PGOV](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#)
SUBJECT: FATAH: ALTERNATE GAZA CITY INTERNAL ELECTIONS

REF: A) JERUSALEM 806 B) JERUSALEM 821 C) JERUSALEM 836

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY. UNDER THE AUSPICES OF FRC MEMBER AHMAD HILLIS, 320 GAZA FATAH ACTIVISTS HELD AN ELECTIONS CONFERENCE AND BRANCH ELECTIONS IN TWO GAZA CITY NEIGHBORHOODS ON MAY 8, ACCORDING TO PARTICIPANTS. THESE ELECTIONS WERE NOT COORDINATED WITH THE GAZA FIELD COMMITTEE. PARTICIPANTS ELECTED HILLIS ALLIES TO THE BRANCHES' SEVEN-MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEES. HILLIS PUBLICLY SAID HIS SUPPORTERS WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS ACROSS GAZA, INCLUDING IN AREAS WHERE THE FIELD COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY CONDUCTED ELECTIONS. THIS EFFORT IS CONSISTENT WITH HILLIS INTENTION TO REPLACE THE FIELD COMMITTEE WITH ELECTED MEMBERS, AND IT DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR FATAH COHESION. END SUMMARY.

ELECTIONS CONFERENCE

¶2. (SBU) 320 GAZA FATAH ACTIVISTS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF FRC MEMBER AHMAD HILLIS HELD AN ELECTIONS CONFERENCE AND BRANCH ELECTIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES IN TWO GAZA CITY NEIGHBORHOODS ON MAY 8, ACCORDING TO PARTICIPANTS. THE ELECTIONS WERE NOT COORDINATED WITH THE GAZA FIELD COMMITTEE ELECTIONS BOARD AND THE FIELD COMMITTEE DID NOT PARTICIPATE. IN ADDITION TO HILLIS, FATAH CENTRAL COMMITTEE (FCC) MEMBER NABIL SHA'ATH, FATAH REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (FRC) MEMBERS ABU ALI MAS,UD, SAMIH NASSER, MG (RET) SA'EB AL-AJAZ, AND AHMAD AL-NASSER OVERSAW THE BRANCH ELECTIONS.

¶3. (SBU) AT THE START OF THE CONFERENCE HELD PRIOR TO VOTING, NABIL SHAATH DELIVERED A SPEECH URGING FATAH MEMBERS TO UPHOLD DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS AND CALLING THEM THE ONLY WAY TO ENHANCE FATAH'S INTERNAL UNITY AND PUBLIC STANDING. (COMMENT: SHAATH DID NOT EXPLICITLY CRITICIZE THE FIELD COMMITTEES IN HIS REMARKS, BUT PARTICIPANTS WOULD HAVE BEEN FAMILIAR WITH HIS PROPOSAL AT THE MAY 3-4 FCC MEETING TO DISMANTLE THE FIELD COMMITTEES. FATAH MEMBERS WILL LIKELY INTERPRET HIS REMARKS TO MEAN HE IS SIDING WITH HILLIS AND AGAINST THE FIELD COMMITTEE. END COMMENT.)

¶4. (SBU) IN REMARKS TO THE ASSEMBLED CONFERENCE, HILLIS SAID FATAH WILL CONTINUE TO HOLD ELECTIONS ACROSS GAZA, AND, IMPLICITLY CRITICIZING THE FIELD COMMITTEES, SAID "ELECTIONS WILL STILL NEED TO BE HELD IN THREE REGIONS IN THE GAZA STRIP," (I.E. IN AREAS WHERE THE FIELD COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY CONDUCTED LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS). HE URGED MEMBERS TO WORK DILIGENTLY TO ATTRACT SUPPORTERS TO FATAH, EXPAND PUBLIC OUTREACH AND DEMONSTRATE SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIANS IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.

BRANCH ELECTIONS

15. (SBU) AT THE CONFERENCE'S CONCLUSION, PARTICIPANTS FROM TWO OF THE FIVE BRANCHES IN THE SHUJAYA NEIGHBORHOOD OF GAZA CITY COMPLETED BALLOTS, ELECTING A SEVEN-MEMBER COMMITTEE AND HILLIS, CLOSE ASSOCIATE ANWAR KHALIL AL-IMBAYAD AS ITS SECRETARY GENERAL. PARTICIPANTS ALSO ELECTED A SEVEN-MEMBER

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COMMITTEE FOR EAST GAZA CITY AND SAMI AL-HILLU (ALSO A CLOSE HILLIS ASSOCIATE) AS ITS SECRETARY GENERAL.

16. (SBU) HILLIS SAID BRANCH ELECTIONS WILL ALSO BE ORGANIZED BY THE END OF THIS WEEK IN THREE OF FIVE BRANCHES IN THE SHUJAYA NEIGHBORHOOD OF GAZA CITY. HE SAID REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE FIVE BRANCHES THEN WILL CONVENE A CONFERENCE TO ELECT DISTRICT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) THESE ELECTIONS FOLLOW BRANCH ELECTIONS IN RAMALLAH THAT WERE ALSO NOT COORDINATED WITH THE FIELD COMMITTEE, AND THEY POSE A DIRECT CHALLENGE TO THE FIELD COMMITTEES MANDATE. RIVAL FATAH ELEMENTS ARE COMPETING BY HOLDING ALTERNATE ELECTIONS RATHER THAN FACING OFF IN HEAD-TO-HEAD ELECTIONS. NEITHER SIDE HAS TRIED TO STOP THE OTHERS ELECTIONS FROM PROCEEDING, AND NEITHER IS APPARENTLY CAPABLE OF BLOCKING RIVAL ELECTIONS. RIVAL GROUPS HAVE NOT YET HELD PARALLEL ELECTIONS IN THE SAME GAZA NEIGHBORHOODS, BUT HILLIS IS THREATENING TO DO SO. IF THERE IS NO COMPROMISE, THE OUTCOME COULD BE TWO RIVAL SETS OF BRANCH AND DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES. THESE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS UNDERSCORE THE SHARP RIVALRY AMONG FATAH LEADERS IN GAZA, WHICH BODES POORLY FOR INSTILLING THE DISCIPLINE THAT FATAH NEEDS TO WIN GENERAL ELECTIONS.
WALLES